International Journal of Home Economics, Hospitality and Allied Research, 4(2): 62-78.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.57012/ijhhr.v4n2.004
Received: August 14, 2025
Revised: November 27, 2025
Accepted: December 20, 2025
Published: December 30, 2025

Original Research Report

Check for updates

Physical Boundary Violation Behaviours among Families in Anambra State, Nigeria

Joy Oluchukwu Okoro[1], Chiamaka Adaobi Chukwuone[1], Amaka Bibian Ezeanwu[1], Anthony Nnaemeka Ugwuanyi[1], Udochukwu Maduabuchi Emeghebo[1], Margaret Ndidiamaka Ezeaku[1]

[1]Department of Home Economics and Hospitality Management Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, P.M.B 41001, Enugu State, Nigeria

***Correspondence:** Joy Oluchukwu Okoro, Department of Home Economics and Hospitality Management Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, P.M.B 41001, Enugu State, Nigeria
oluchukwu.okoro@unn.edu.ng

Abstract: The study examined physical boundary violation behaviours and their underlying causes among families in Anambra State, Nigeria. Guided by two specific purposes of study, two research questions and two null hypotheses, the study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population comprised 1,468,793 households across Anambra State, with a sample of 400 respondents selected using convenience sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, validated by seven experts from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and pilot-tested with 40 respondents in Enugu State. Reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha yielded a coefficient of 0.8. Data were analysed using mean, standard deviation, and t-tests. Findings revealed that physical boundary violations are prevalent among family members, including the Key physical boundary violations identified: going through phones or messages without permission, hitting, among others. Also, the main causes of boundary violations include, amongst others, lack of awareness, poor communication, blaming others and neglecting family roles. T-test results showed no significant differences between married and unmarried respondents or between husbands and wives regarding perceptions of boundary violations. The study concludes that physical boundary violations significantly affect family relationships in Anambra State. The study recommends promoting open communication and mutual respect among family members, providing counselling services to address conflicts from boundary violations, and implementing awareness campaigns by government and non-governmental organisations on the causes and consequences of boundary violations.

Keywords: Boundary violations, Family members, Causes, Communication, Counselling.

1. Introduction

Family conflicts have been widely evaluated in relation to communication problems, emotional abuse, and socio-economic factors; however, physical boundary violations within family settings have received limited research attention, particularly in Anambra State. The paucity of empirical evidence on how physical boundary violations contribute to family conflicts in the state creates a critical knowledge gap. Addressing this gap is necessary for improving family counselling and conflict-prevention strategies in Anambra State.

The family is the primary social unit where individuals interact, share resources, and develop emotional, social, and behavioural patterns (Jetiyanuwat et al., 2024; Qiao et al., 2024). Healthy family functioning depends largely on the establishment and maintenance of boundaries that define the limits of acceptable behaviour, personal space, and interpersonal interaction among members. Boundaries are the emotional, physical, and psychological limits that help individuals maintain autonomy and safety within close relationships (Mirlisenna et al., 2024). Among these, physical boundaries, which include personal space, bodily autonomy, privacy, and respect for physical limits, are essential for fostering security and mutual respect within the family system.

However, in many families, these boundaries are poorly defined or frequently violated across parent–child, spousal, and sibling relationships. Physical boundary violation behaviours may include invasion of personal space, unauthorised access to personal belongings, unwanted physical contact, over-monitoring, or aggressive behaviours. Such violations often lead to discomfort, fear, resentment, conflict, and emotional distress among family members (Lee et al., 2024). These problems typically arise when family members fail to recognise or respect individual physical limits, resulting in harmful relational patterns.

Several underlying causes contribute to physical boundary violations within families. These include lack of communication, overprotectiveness, emotional dysregulation, neglect of family roles, cultural norms supporting dominance or hierarchy, and unresolved interpersonal conflict (Vanwoerden

et al., 2018). In families where boundaries are unclear or rigid, interactions may become controlling or intrusive, increasing the likelihood of physical boundary violations (Mukai et al., 2024). When the behaviours persist unchecked, they often generate long-term consequences such as dysfunctional relationships, loss of trust, increased family tension, and persistent conflict.

In the context of Anambra State, boundary violation has been identified as a significant factor contributing to family conflicts and crises. Families in the state often underestimate the importance of setting healthy boundaries, believing that family closeness naturally eliminates the need for explicit limits. Additionally, variations in educational levels, gender expectations, and socio-economic status among spouses contribute to power imbalances, which may further encourage physical boundary violation behaviours (National Human Rights Commission Nigeria, 2024). These behaviours have been linked to rising rates of marital conflict, separation, domestic violence, and other negative family outcomes within the state.

Despite the growing evidence that boundary violations contribute to persistent family disputes, many families in Anambra State lack awareness of the nature of physical boundaries and how their violation fuels conflict. Understanding these behaviours and their underlying causes is therefore crucial for preventing family discord, promoting respect for personal space, and improving overall family functioning.

Statement of the Problem

Families in Anambra State, Nigeria, are increasingly experiencing conflicts arising from physical boundary violations, including intrusion into personal space, unwanted physical interference, and disregard for bodily autonomy among family members. Such violations commonly occur within spousal, parent–child, and extended family relationships and are reinforced by poor communication, shifting gender roles, and power imbalances. These persistent boundary violations have contributed to escalating family conflicts, emotional distress, mistrust, and marital instability, highlighting the need for systematic examination of physical boundary violations among families in Anambra State.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study was to examine physical boundary violation behaviours and their underlying causes among families in Anambra State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study determined the;

a) Physical boundary violation behaviours that exist among family members in Anambra State
b) The underlying causes of boundary violation behaviours that exist among family members in Anambra State

1.3. Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

a) What are the physical boundary violation behaviours that exist among family members in Anambra State?
b) What are the underlying causes of boundary violation behaviours that exist among family members in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested by the study at the 0.05 level of significance.

Ho_1: There is no significant difference in the mean responses on the physical boundary violation behaviours that exist between husband and wife in Anambra State

Ho_2: There is no significant difference in the mean responses on the underlying causes of boundary violations behaviours that exist between married and unmarried family members in Anambra State

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Design for the Study

The study used a descriptive survey research design, which enabled systematic collection and analysis of data on boundary violation behaviours for conflict resolution among family members in Anambra State. According to Nworgu (2015), descriptive surveys collect data typically through questionnaires to describe characteristics such as attitudes, activities, motivations, and opinions within

a population. This design allowed the researcher to gather data from a large sample, making it suitable for generalising findings to the wider Anambra State population. It was therefore appropriate for the study, which relied on questionnaires to analyse boundary violation behaviours among family members in the area.

Ethics Statement

Ethical approval for this study on Physical Boundary Violation Behaviours and Their Underlying Causes Among Families in Anambra State, Nigeria, has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee, Department of Home Economics and Hospitality Management Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The rights, privacy, and well-being of families in Anambra were protected throughout the study in accordance with established ethical standards for research involving family members, ensuring that they were fully aware of the purpose, procedures, risks, and benefits of the research to the Anambra State communities. Also, confidentiality was maintained throughout the research process; personal identifiers were removed from data reports to protect participant identity. The data collected were used solely for this research.

Area of the Study

This study was conducted in Anambra State, one of the southeastern states of Nigeria. It is bordered by Kogi to the north, Enugu to the east, Abia to the southeast, Imo and Rivers to the south, and Delta and Edo to the west. The state covers the lower Anambra River valley, a tributary of the Niger River. Predominantly Christian, Anambra traditionally upholds the nuclear family structure of one man and one wife. The state has 21 local government areas and 179 towns, comprising diverse populations male and female, married and unmarried—across urban, semi-urban, and rural settings. Anambra was selected for the study because it contains varied socioeconomic groups, with families striving to make ends meet. Coastal residents are mainly fishermen and traders, while others are civil servants, private employees, or self-employed. Many married men are wealthy traders with limited formal education, whereas many women are more educated, contributing to frequent family conflicts

related to boundary violations.

Population

The population for this study comprised 1,468,793 households in Anambra State, as documented by the National Population Commission of Nigeria and the National Bureau of Statistics (2006). These households provided the sampling frame for the study. However, the unit of analysis and respondents were individual family members, specifically fathers, mothers, and unmarried adult members of the family residing within these households. Although households were used to define the population frame, data were collected from individual family members, and all analyses were conducted at the individual level.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

A sample of 400 respondents was used for the study, with the sample size determined using the Taro Yamane formula. A multistage sampling technique was adopted. First, cluster sampling was used to divide Anambra State into its three Senatorial Districts. Anambra Central Senatorial District was then selected for the study. Second, proportionate sampling was employed to determine the number of respondents selected from each Local Government Area (LGA) within the district based on population size. Third, simple random sampling was used to select households within each LGA, ensuring that each household had an equal chance of selection. Finally, convenience sampling was applied to select eligible individual family members (fathers, mothers, or unmarried adults) within the selected households who were available and willing to participate in the study. This multistage approach ensured adequate representation while allowing practical access to respondents.

Instrument for Data Collection and Study Procedure

The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher from a review of the literature and in line with the objectives of the study. The questionnaire was divided into two parts: Part A and Part B. Part A sought information on personal data of the respondents, while

Part B was structured to obtain information on analyses of boundary violation behaviours for conflict resolution among family members in Anambra State. Part B of the questionnaire was Sub- divided into two sections in line with the specific objectives of the study. Section A, containing 29 items developed to find out the physical boundary violation behaviours that exist among family members, while Section B contains 37 items designed to find out the underlying causes of boundary violation behaviours that exist among family members. All the clusters have a four-point response option of strongly agree (SA); agree (A); disagree (D); and strongly disagree (SD), with corresponding values of 4,3,2 and 1.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The questionnaire was face-validated by seven experts from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, drawn from the Faculties of Vocational and Technical Education, Social Sciences, and Agriculture. Specifically, four experts were from Home Economics and Hospitality Management Education, one from Agricultural Education, one from Social Work, and one from Home Science and Management. The experts evaluated the instrument for clarity of items, relevance to the study objectives, appropriateness of wording, and adequacy of coverage of physical boundary violations and family conflict. Their comments, including suggested additions, deletions, and rewording of items, were incorporated to produce the final validated questionnaire used for the study.

The instrument was administered and trial tested on 40 respondents in Eungu State. Enugu State was used because it is a neighboring State to Anambra and they both have a similar socio-economic, socio-political, socio-cultural and religious background. To discover and determine the internal consistency of the items in the instrument, Cronbach's Alpha reliability technique was used to analyse the acquired data. The data was used to calculate the alpha coefficient. The reliability of the questionnaire was tested using Cronbach’s Alpha. The results were 0.88 for Section A and 0.86 for Section B, indicating that the instrument was reliable. Cronbach’s Alpha values above 0.70 are considered acceptable, demonstrating that the questionnaire consistently measures the intended constructs

Data Collection Technique

A total of 400 questionnaires were hand-delivered to households, each including a husband, wife, and at least one other adult, with the help of five trained research assistants. Completed questionnaires were collected on the spot, and 387 were retrieved, representing a 97% response rate.

Data Analysis Technique

Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Means and standard deviations were used to interpret responses, with scales defined as: 3.50–4.0 = Strongly Agree, 2.50–3.49 = Agree, 1.50–2.49 = Disagree, and 1.00–1.49 = Strongly Disagree. Hypotheses were tested using t-tests at a 0.05 significance level, with null hypotheses upheld if $p \geq 0.05$ and rejected if $p < 0.05$.

3. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of the respondents on physical boundary violation behaviours that exist among family members in Anambra State. N= 387

SN	Types of physical boundary Violation behaviours	$\bar{x}$	SD	Re.
1	Going through someone's phone without permission	3.46	0.74	A
2	Hitting	3.41	0.71	A
3	Not respecting others' schedules	3.14	0.69	A
4	Not respecting ones believe	3.11	0.73	A
5	Shying away from one's roles and responsibilities in the family	3.17	0.83	A
6	Not seeking permission before using someone else's items	3.24	0.73	A
7	Not respecting personal space and privacy	3.29	0.81	A
8	Mental boundaries (engaging in open-minded discussions	2.94	0.88	A
9	Not respecting personal belongings	3.19	0.70	A
10	Attempting to control another person	3.34	0.72	A
11	Listening to another person's private conversations without their permission	3.25	0.85	A
12	Gaslighting (manipulating someone into questioning their own perception of reality)	3.22	0.84	A
13	Nagging and arguing,	3.35	0.70	A
14	Shaming someone	3.32	0.74	A
15	Inappropriate touching	3.37	0.66	A
16	Disregarding someone's feelings	3.34	0.78	A

17	Intimidating a family member	3.30	0.76	A
18	Humiliating a family member	3.31	0.82	A
19	Unprofessional conduct	3.04	0.82	A
20	Unsolicited touching	3.33	0.71	A
	Overall	3.26	0.68	A

NB: x̄ = Mean; SD= Standard deviation, Re= Remark, A= Agree, D= Disagree, N= number of respondents

3.1. Table 1 presents the means and standard deviations of physical boundary violation behaviours among family members in Anambra State. Mean values ranged from 2.94 to 3.46, with standard deviations of 0.66–0.88, indicating moderate variability. Respondents generally agreed that these behaviours are prevalent (2.50–3.49), with the highest-rated violations being checking someone's phone without permission (3.46), pressuring for intimacy (3.37), inappropriate touching (3.37), and nagging/arguing (3.35). The overall Grand Mean was 3.26, and the Grand SD was 0.68, confirming the prevalence of physical boundary violations. The study found that physical boundary violations are prevalent among family members in Anambra State. Common behaviours include checking someone's phone without permission (Laird et al., 2024), coercion into intimacy (Parkinson et al., 2024; Woodin & O'Leary, 2024), inappropriate touching (Bagwell-Grey, 2021), nagging and arguing, shaming and disregarding feelings (Kocherhina, 2018), and intimidation (Hilton et al., 2024). These actions often stem from power imbalances and poor communication, leading to emotional distress and strained family relationships (Ledbetter, 2019; Schrodt, 2025).

Table 2: t-test analysis of the responses on the physical boundary violation behaviours between husband and wife in Anambra State

S/N	Physical boundary violations	Husband		Wife		t-value	Dec
		x̄	SD	x̄	SD		
1	Going through someone's phone without permission	3.76	0.55	3.24	0.89	4.67	S
2	Hitting	3.40	0.60	3.39	0.78	0.07	NS
3	Not respecting others' schedules	3.28	0.57	3.07	0.66	2.32	NS
4	Not respecting ones believe	3.18	0.68	3.00	0.88	1.57	NS
5	Shying away from one's roles and responsibilities in the family	3.28	0.70	3.14	0.87	1.20	NS

6	Not seeking permission before using someone else's items	3.19	0.74	3.18	0.69	0.11	S
7	Not respecting personal space and privacy	3.17	1.04	3.26	0.63	-0.77	S
8	Mental boundaries (engaging in open-minded discussions	3.06	0.69	2.74	0.96	2.53	S
9	Not respecting personal belongings	3.35	0.59	3.14	0.71	2.11	NS
10	Attempting to control another person	3.19	0.82	3.35	0.71	-1.41	S
11	Listening to another person's private conversations without their permission	3.39	0.85	3.06	0.97	2.45	NS
12	Gaslighting (manipulating someone into questioning their own perception of reality)	3.23	0.55	3.22	0.94	0.02	S
13	Nagging and Arguing,	3.41	0.76	3.48	0.61	-0.69	NS
14	Shaming someone	3.53	0.61	3.15	0.82	3.51	NS
15	Inappropriate touching	3.32	0.60	3.35	0.70	-0.22	S
16	Disregarding someone's feelings	3.34	0.75	3.42	0.71	-0.75	NS
17	Intimidating a family member	3.41	0.56	3.24	0.84	1.57	S
18	Humiliating a family member	3.10	0.84	3.26	0.86	-1.24	NS
19	Unprofessional conduct	2.95	0.76	2.95	0.96	-0.04	NS
20	Unsolicited touching	3.19	0.74	3.31	0.70	-1.15	NS
	Overall					0.65	NS

NB: SD= Standard deviation, Re= Remark, A= Agree, D= Disagree, t= t-test, S= Significant, NS= Not significant

Table 2 shows a t-value of 0.65, greater than the 0.05 significance level, so the null hypothesis is not rejected. This indicates no significant difference between husbands' and wives' responses on physical boundary violations. The grand mean of 3.23 shows general agreement on their prevalence, while the low standard deviation (0.16) reflects minimal variability in responses.

Table 3: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation on underlying causes of boundary violation behaviours that exist among family members in Anambra State. N=387

S/N	Causes of boundary violation behaviours	$\bar{x}$	SD	Re.
1	Lack of awareness about an issue	3.41	0.67	A
2	Making unnecessary excuses	3.34	0.69	A
3	Blaming one for another's problem	3.39	0.71	A
4	Neglecting family roles and duties	3.24	0.89	A
5	Disregarding personal space	3.17	0.87	A

6	Stress and external pressures from outside the family	3.19	0.78	A
7	Family member having mental health challenges	3.25	0.82	A
8	Invading ones privacy	3.29	0.85	A
9	Poor communication skills among family members	3.32	0.78	A
10	Sexually abusing someone	3.22	0.84	A
11	Substance abuse among couples	3.06	0.84	A
12	Giving unsolicited advice among family members	3.16	0.81	A
13	Conflict avoidance in the family	2.89	1.03	A
14	Making unnecessary or hurtful comments to family members	3.27	0.81	A
15	Engaging in overly controlling behaviours	3.12	0.84	A
16	Over-reliance or dependence on an adult member of the family	3.12	0.92	A
17	Exhibiting jealousy in the home	3.11	0.70	A
18	Undue Pressuring of Family Members	3.23	0.72	A
19	Making nasty comments about someone	3.01	0.88	A
20	Trying to define who one should be	2.95	0.81	A
21	Trying to change ones behavior	3.08	0.88	A
22	Showing more affection to a particular family member	3.12	0.88	A
23	Trying to make people feel guilty about doing things that interest them	3.03	0.93	A
24	Expecting one to take responsibility for others' feelings	3.18	0.73	A
25	Loss of trust among couples	3.36	0.86	A
26	Checking someone's bank details without permission	3.11	0.86	A
27	Lack of empathy among family members	3.14	0.76	A
28	Checking someone's phone without permission	3.37	0.77	A
29	Taking someone's belongings without permission	3.28	0.78	A
30	Expecting so much from others	3.14	0.85	A
31	Reading someone's messages without the person's consent	3.32	0.81	A
32	Being overly anxious in the family	2.94	0.87	A
33	Blame game among family members	3.10	0.81	A
34	Unemployment among family members	3.09	0.87	A
35	Economic hardship in the family	3.21	0.78	A
36	Having differing beliefs in the family	3.17	0.83	A
37	Lack of communication about an issue	3.35	0.68	A
	Overall	3.13	0.82	A

NB: $\bar{x}$ = Mean; SD= Standard deviation, Re= Remark, A= Agree, D= Disagree, N= number of respondents

Table 3 shows that mean values for causes of boundary violations among family members in Anambra State range from 2.89 to 3.41, with standard deviations of 0.67–1.03. Respondents generally agree that these factors contribute to boundary violations. The highest-rated cause is "lack of awareness about an issue" (3.41, SD = 0.67), while the lowest-rated is "conflict avoidance in the family" (2.89, SD = 1.03).

Table 4: t-test of the responses of the married and unmarried family members on the causes of boundary violation behaviour in Anambra State.

S/N	Causes of boundary violation behaviour	Married		Unmarried		t-value	Dec
		$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD		
1	Lack of awareness about an issue	3.50	0.61	3.41	0.55	1.43	NS
2	Making unnecessary excuses	3.27	0.78	3.39	0.62	-1.65	S
3	Blaming one for another's problem	3.25	0.74	3.52	0.63	-3.41	S
4	Neglecting family roles and duties	3.06	1.11	3.31	0.66	-2.34	S
5	Disregarding personal space	3.10	0.92	3.19	0.85	-0.94	NS
6	Stress and external pressures from outside the family	3.09	0.74	3.30	0.78	-2.36	S
7	Family member having mental health challenges	3.22	0.87	3.25	0.80	-0.35	NS
8	Invading one's privacy	3.28	0.83	3.33	0.71	-0.48	NS
9	Poor communication skills among family members	3.22	0.80	3.35	0.72	-1.59	NS
10	Sexually abusing someone	3.04	0.95	3.36	0.72	-3.28	S
11	Substance abuse among couples	2.89	0.87	3.21	0.77	-3.45	NS
12	Giving unsolicited advice among family members	3.15	0.87	3.10	0.80	0.51	NS
13	Conflict avoidance in the family	2.85	1.09	2.82	0.97	0.31	S
14	Making unnecessary or hurtful comments to family members	3.15	0.85	3.36	0.82	-2.12	NS
15	Engaging in overly controlling behaviours	2.95	0.90	3.35	0.79	-4.19	NS
16	Over-reliance or dependence on an adult member of the family	2.95	0.96	3.27	0.82	-3.20	NS
17	Exhibiting jealousy in the home	2.96	0.74	3.22	0.69	-3.23	NS
18	Undue Pressuring of Family Members	3.20	0.69	3.25	0.71	-0.66	NS
19	Making nasty comments about someone	2.99	0.95	3.05	0.78	-0.66	S
20	Trying to define who one should be	2.89	0.83	2.91	0.80	-0.17	NS

21	Trying to change ones behavior	3.08	0.85	2.97	0.84	1.13	NS
22	Showing more affection to a particular family member	3.11	0.94	3.05	0.93	0.52	NS
23	Trying to make people feel guilty about doing things that interest them	2.88	0.98	3.19	0.84	-3.04	S
24	Expecting one to take responsibility for others' feelings	3.14	0.81	3.32	0.78	-1.93	NS
25	Loss of trust among couples	3.25	0.89	3.46	0.85	-2.12	NS
26	Checking someone's bank details without permission	2.91	0.98	3.22	0.72	-3.09	S
27	Lack of empathy among family members	2.95	0.72	3.30	0.70	-4.31	NS
28	Checking someone's phone without permission	3.36	0.80	3.45	0.75	-0.95	NS
29	Taking someone's belongings without permission	3.27	0.80	3.35	0.78	-0.89	NS
30	Expecting so much from others	2.94	0.94	3.31	0.73	-3.84	S
31	Reading someone's messages without the person's consent	3.22	0.87	3.41	0.70	-2.11	S
32	Being overly anxious in the family	2.92	0.82	3.02	0.95	-0.94	S
33	Blame game among family members	3.25	0.87	3.07	0.75	1.96	S
34	Unemployment among family members	3.12	0.94	3.04	0.82	0.80	S
35	Economic hardship in the family	3.32	0.74	3.15	0.85	1.83	S
36	Having differing beliefs in the family	3.20	0.69	3.32	0.83	-1.36	S
37	Lack of communication about an issue	3.48	0.64	3.35	0.65	1.74	NS
	Overall					-1.31	NS

NB: SD= Standard deviation, Re= Remark, A= Agree, D= Disagree, t= t-test, S= Significant, NS= Not significant

Table 4 shows a t-value of -1.31, greater than 0.05, so the null hypothesis is not rejected.This indicates no significant overall difference between married and unmarried family members regarding causes of boundary violations, with both groups generally agreeing despite some item-level variations.All t-test results include degrees of freedom (df = 398) since the sample size was 400 ($n_1 + n_2 - 2 = 200 + 200 - 2 = 398$). Although the overall t-test was not significant (t = -1.31, NS), item-level analysis revealed significant differences for specific causes, such as blaming others, neglecting family roles, stress, sexual abuse, and checking someone's bank details. This means that while overall perceptions are similar, certain behaviors are viewed differently by married and unmarried family members, highlighting the importance of examining individual items alongside overall results.

Limitations of the study

This study sampled only 400 respondents from the entire population of 1,468,793households. This sample being very minute may have an effect on the result gathered from the responses of the respondents. This means that there might be a difference from the response that would have been gotten from the entire population if used. This limited sample was occasioned by financial constraints that faced this study. However, in order to overcome this challenge, the researcher adopted a survey design that allows the generalisation of findings to represent the opinion of the entire population. Also, the study was limited to a single state (Anambra), which restricts the generalizability of findings to other States with different family structures.

Suggestions for Further Studies

There is a need to conduct more studies in these areas:

1. Accessing Boundary Violations in Urban and Rural Settings within Anambra State.
2. Impact of Boundary violations on Children's Psychological well-being and academic performance.

4. Conclusion

The study found that physical boundary violations are prevalent among families in Anambra State, driven by factors such as lack of awareness, trust issues, and poor communication. These violations, along with financial, sexual, and religious boundary breaches, contribute to family conflicts and psychological distress. Challenges like fear of conflict and financial dependence hinder effective boundary-setting. The findings highlight the need for strategies that promote awareness, respect, and healthier family interactions.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Families should be encouraged to engage in open and honest communication to foster trust and respect.

2. Family members should be encouraged to respect individual differences and religious beliefs to foster peaceful coexistence.
3. Counselling services should be made available to address family conflicts arising from boundary violations.

References

Bagwell-Gray, M. E. (2021). Validation of the taxonomy of intimate partner sexual violence. *Violence Against Women*, *27*(6-7), 784–806. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801220906542

Hilton, N. Z., Ham, E., Radatz, D. L., Smith, C. M., Snow, N., Wintermute, J., Jennings-Fitz-Gerald, E., Lee, J., & Patterson, S. (2024). Coercive control in 2SLGBTQQIA+ relationships: A scoping review. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, *25*(5), 3713–3728.https://doi.org/10.1177/15248380241257957

Horstman, H. K., Schrodt, P., Warner, B., Koerner, A., Maliski, R., Hays, A., & Colaner, C. W. (2018). Expanding the conceptual and empirical boundaries of family communication patterns: The development and validation of an expanded conformity orientation scale. *Communication Monographs*, *85*(2), 157–180.https://doi.org/10.1080/15267431.2017.1347568

Jetiyanuwat, S., Kawilapat, S., Narkpongphun, A., & Pojanapotha, P. (2024). Association between family functioning, child emotional and behavioral problems, and parental stress during the COVID-19 pandemic in Thailand. *Behavioral Sciences, 14*(4), 270.https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14040270

Kocherhina, I. (2018). Types of emotional self-regulation of women who have suffered from psychological abuse in the family. *Social Welfare: Interdisciplinary Approach*, *8*(1), 86–95.

Laird, R. D., Leon, S. V., & Ku, E. S. (2024). Adolescents' perceptions of privacy violations by parents, siblings, and friends. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *53*(10), 2286–2298.https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-024-02024-1

Ledbetter, A. M. (2019). Parent-child privacy boundary conflict patterns during the first year of college: Mediating family communication patterns, predicting psychosocial distress. *Human Communication Research*, *45*(3), 255–285.https://doi.org/10.1093/hcr/hqy018

Lee, J., Neppl, T. K., Russell, D. W., & Lohman, B. J. (2024). Chronic family economic hardship, family processes and progression of mental and physical health symptoms in adolescence. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *53*(2), 374–385.https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-023-01872-w

Lee, M., Kim, J., & Park, S. (2024). Boundary setting and emotional self-preservation in women from emotionally restrictive family environments. *Psychology of Woman Journal, 5*(2), 178-185.

Mirlisenna, I., Bonino, G., Mazza, A., Capiotto, F., Romano Cappi, G., Cariola, M., Valvo, A., De Francesco, L., & Dal Monte, O. (2024). How interpersonal distance varies throughout the lifespan. *Scientific Reports*, 14, 25439.https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-024-74532-z

Mukai, K., Isomura, T., Onagawa, R., & Watanabe, K. (2024). Electrocardiographic activity depends on the relative position between intimate persons. *Scientific Reports, 14*(1).https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-024-54439-5

National Human Rights Commission Nigeria. (2024). Annual report on domestic human rights violations. NHRC Nigeria. Retrieved fromhttps://www.jurist.org/news/2024/02/nigeria-human-rights-commission-reports-increase-in-domestic-human-rights-violations/

Nworgu, B.G. (2015), Educational Measurement and Evaluation. Theory and Practice. (2nd Edition)

Parkinson, R., Jong, S. T., & Hanson, S. (2024). Subtle or covert abuse within intimate partner relationships: A scoping review. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, *25*(5), 3491–3506.https://doi.org/10.1177/15248380241268643

Qiao, T., Sun, Y., Ye, P., Yan, J., Wang, X., & Song, Z. (2024). The association between family functioning and problem behaviors among Chinese preschool left-behind children: The chain mediating effect of emotion regulation and psychological resilience. *Frontiers in Psychology, 15*, 1343908.https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1343908

Ross, D. B., Gale, J., Wickrama, K. K. A. S., Goetz, J., & Vowels, M. (2019). The impact of family economic strain on work-family conflict, marital support, marital quality, and marital stability during the middle years. *Journal of Personal Finance*, *18*(2), 9–24.

Schrodt, P. (2025). Interparental conflict and parent–child triangulation: A meta-analytical review of children feeling caught between parents. *Human Communication Research*, *51*(1), 109–130.https://doi.org/10.1093/hcr/hqaf018

Thomson, D., McFarlane, J., Jones, C., Hussain, R., Egan, R., Roper, J., Thabrew, H., & Macfarlane, S. (2024). Boundaries in health settings: A discursive paper. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *80*(9), 3743–3755.https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.16339

Vanwoerden, S., Kalpakci, A. H., Elzie, A. M., Temple, J. R., & Sharp, C. (2019). The relations between inadequate parent–child boundaries and borderline personality disorder in adolescence. *Psychiatry Research*, *271*, 378–384.https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2018.11.058

Woodin, E. M., & O'Leary, K. D. (2024). The trauma and mental health impacts of coercive control: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, *25*(1), 123–138.https://doi.org/10.1177/15248380231158590

Zietz, S., Lansford, J. E., Bornstein, M. H., Putnick, D. L., Bradley, R. H., Costa, M., Dagan, R., Deater-Deckard, K., Di Giunta, L., Dodge, K. A., Gurdal, S., Liu, Q., Long, Q., Oburu, P.,

Pastorelli, C., Skinner, A. T., Sorbring, E., Steinberg, L., Tapanya, S., Yotanyamaneewong, S. (2022). A longitudinal examination of the family stress model of economic hardship in seven countries. *Child & Youth Services Review*, *143*, Article 106661. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2022.106661

Publisher:Department of Home Economics and Hospitality Management Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

© 2025 the Author(s), licensee Department of Home Economics and Hospitality Management Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0)